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6/24/98

NSC BRIEFING

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

20 DECEMBER 1955

BACKGROUND--23 DEC MEETING OF SUPREME SOVIET

- I. When Supreme Soviet convenes on 23 Dec, it will be second time in history that the body has met three times in the same year.
 - A. Last three-meeting year was 1939, when first session met for routine business, second (Aug) dealt with Nazi-Soviet Pact and third (Nov) concerned dismemberment of Poland.
 - B. Soviet Constitution calls for two meetings a year, but it has been custom in recent years to meet only once.
- II. Triple meetings this year less ominous in character than in '39
 - A. First session this year was routine business; second dealt with Summit Conference.
 - B. Already announced that 23 Dec session will deal with '56 budget; although this will be first time a budget is considered before beginning of year, action fits past two years' trend towards rationalization of economic structure, and no surprises expected.
 - C. In addition, we expect travelling salesman (Malenkov & Khrushchev) to report on South Asia trek: in this connection, may announce Soviet economic aid program for underdeveloped areas.
- III. Three sessions this year also serve to strengthen desired illusion that collegial leadership is accountable to elected body.
 - A. No leadership changes of major nature expected: if any Presidium members are in trouble (maybe Molotov?), matter will probably wait until mid-Feb '56 Party Congress (20th).

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28 Jan 56
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